

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 84

By Finney R.

A RESOLUTION to recognize the volunteers of the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy for promoting and developing leadership skills in the young people of Blount County.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable organizations whose members serve to mold and guide today's youth to become the principled leaders of tomorrow; and

WHEREAS, the volunteers of the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy, located in Alcoa, give greatly of themselves to help disadvantaged young people rise above their circumstances; and

WHEREAS, partnered with local schools and the Blount County Chamber of Commerce, the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy is a non-profit, Bible-based mentoring and self-development program for the young people of Blount County; it is a development initiative of the New Trinity Church of God in Christ of Knoxville and of Life Covenant Ministries of Nashville; and

WHEREAS, the Academy bears the name of the late Richard Williams, Jr., who was a leader in the City of Alcoa and Blount County, where he served as a Blount County commissioner; among other honors and accolades, Mr. Williams was listed in the *Who's Who Among Black Americans* and received the governor's Tennessee Volunteer Commendation Award; his brother, George Williams, serves as the executive director of the Academy today; and

WHEREAS, the Leadership Academy cadets, as the young people are referred to, meet weekly to receive help from volunteers with any personal issues that might interfere with scholastic achievement or attendance; the cadets also receive academic tutoring, complete community service projects, and participate in field trips; they are consistently encouraged and rewarded in many different ways; and

WHEREAS, at the Academy, emphasis is placed upon issues of integrity, appropriate dress, respect, manners, and personal responsibility; this emphasis develops the cadets' potential to make meaningful contributions to society; and

WHEREAS, one major goal of the volunteers of the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy is to help the cadets, through a twenty-week course, achieve perfect school attendance and Honor Roll status; last year, eighty-seven percent of leadership cadets, who previously had had problems with school delinquency, achieved perfect attendance, and several were on the Honor Roll for at least one semester; and

WHEREAS, the success of the State of Tennessee, the strength of our communities, and the overall vitality of our society depend, in great measure, on the dedication of people such as those who volunteer for the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy, who use their considerable talents and resources to model for and serve others; and

WHEREAS, the establishment and encouragement of leadership and values within our youth is an admirable task, and those noble public servants who undertake this responsibility deserve our commendation and praise; and

WHEREAS, likewise, the young people who participate in this estimable event also merit recognition; they show great promise for the future and possess the same fundamental principles that have made our great State and Nation thrive; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting for the members of this General Assembly to pause in their deliberations to salute those youth supporters and young citizens who, through their remarkable efforts, have distinguished themselves as emerging community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we recognize the Richard Williams, Jr., Leadership Development Academy, thank its many participants and organizers for their dedication to instilling exceptional values in our youth, and extend our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.